

Mary Henley Bowen, December 21, 1826, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

JACKSON'S MARRIAGE: SWORN STATEMENT OF MRS. MARY H. BOWEN.

Sumner County, Tenn. , December 21, 1826.

The statement of Mrs. Bowen, widow of Col William Bowen deceased, and sister of Genl Russel and also of the late Col Russel of Fayette county Kentucky: also Mother of the late John H Bowen Esqr. late a Representative of Tennessee in the Congress of the United States.

My Father married Mrs Campbell the sister of Patric Henry of Va, and settled at the salt Works in Washington county a few miles from Abingdon Va. After this event about the year 1785 Mr Bowen and myself moved from Washington and settled upon the spot where I now live in Sumner County Tennessee. Soon after our arrival we became acquainted with the family of Mrs Donelson, the mother of Mrs Jackson, who settled the fall after our arrival within a mile of us, and since this period have lived in the same neighborhood. With this family we have always lived in habits of intimacy, and friendship.

At the time of my first acquaintance with the family of Mrs Donelson, that is in 1786, her daughter Mrs Roberts was then in Kentucky where she was settled, and married. In the year after this I became acquainted with her, having been brought down to this country by her Brother Samuel Donelson, who as I understood then, and have always since believed, went after her, in consequence of the cruel treatment which she had received from her husband. upon her arrival here, I was introduced to her, and from the intimacy and confidence which soon prevailed between us, I was convinced that the conduct of

Library of Congress

her husband was illiberal and unjust. I can safely say that the deportment of no lady ever seemed to me more guarded, or more free from those faults which usually give rise to jealousy and illwill. Some time after this Mr Roberts came to this county with the view of becoming reconciled again to his wife, as I understood; their differences were made up, by the interference of some of the relations of mrs Roberts, and they agreed to live together again, and did occupy, as I then heard, a separate house in the yard of Mrs Donelson. It was at this period that the unhappy difference arose which caused another rupture between Mr and Mrs Roberts; the circumstances so far as I now recollect them, are as follows. Genl Jackson and Judge overton with some other young Gentlemen were boarding in the family of Mrs Donelson. Genl Jackson soon became the object of Mr Roberts' jealousy and illwill, who seemed to indulge the same cruel suspicions in regard to the conduct of his wife which had led to their separation in Kentucky; the effect of which was the voluntary withdrawal of the Genl from the family, while mr and mrs Roberts remained with it. Mr Roberts however did not long remain before he set out for Kentucky: whether with the intention of returning or not I do not know; but he was not long gone before it was understood that a divorce had been granted upon his application separating him from his wife. In this transaction, I can safely say, from my intimacy with both Mrs Donelson and Mrs Roberts, as well as Genl Jackson, that not the least censure ought to be thrown upon any person but Mr Roberts. When the circumstance happened this was the language of all the county; and I never heard until now that there was any person living, who had from a knowledge of the facts, entertained a different opinion, except Mr Roberts himself, in whose weak and childish disposition, I think, the whole affair originated.

Done at my plantation in Sumner County Tennessee, this 21st of December, 1826 as witness my hand and signature

The above statement was twice distinctly read to Mrs. Bowen; after which her name was signed by her son, in my presence, by her direction, alledging that her hand was so tremulous she could not well write it.

Library of Congress

W. B. Lewis